

# MEMO

**TO:** Energy and Environment Committee

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**DATE:** January 6, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Energy Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan

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## **SUMMARY:**

Per Regional Council direction, SCAG staff is preparing a Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) to implement and promote policy objectives of the Regional Council, fulfill the new organizational Strategic Plan, and serve to assist outside parties in working within regional plans. One chapter of the RCP is the Energy chapter.

At its November 22, 2004 meeting, the Regional Comprehensive Plan Task Force (RCP Task Force) reviewed current SCAG policies regarding energy and began to create an action plan for energy issues. The RCP Task Force asked staff to report the Task Force's progress on the Energy chapter to the Energy and Environment Committee.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Over its next series of meetings, the RCP Task Force will review currently adopted policies of each of the chapters of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and provide input. Discussion will focus on the existing SCAG policies regarding the subject areas and how to craft an Action Plan that stakeholders can use to implement the regional policies.

The Energy chapter describes the current conditions and objectives of regional energy issues. However, the major focus of this, and the other RCP chapters, is on the specific actions for specific stakeholders. Regional Council adopted policies provide the framework for the Action Plan. The policies are from the Compass Growth Vision, the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan, Regional Council resolutions, and the original Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide. The items in the Action Plan relate to the policies. The Action Plan includes actions stipulated in the 2004 Regional Transportation Plan Program Environmental Impact Report, actions from the existing energy chapter, and actions developed by the Task Force.

SCAG staff completed an update of the original 1996 Energy chapter in 2002. Last fiscal year, SCAG staff prepared a report describing regional energy efficiency efforts and renewable energy efforts as they related to buildings. The Regional Council in September 2004 directed staff to incorporate the work on building energy efficiency into the Energy chapter of the RCP.



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Staff has contacted a list of stakeholders to solicit input in developing the outline for the Energy chapter. Staff contacted those who had participated in the 2002 Energy chapter update as well as those involved in a statewide local government staff energy group. Experts who responded with feedback were interested in expanding the sections on renewable energy and distributed generation, addressing energy sources such as biofuels and waste to energy, addressing demand side management programs, and including information on combined heat and power and community choice aggregation. The Building Industry Association expressed opposition to inclusion of building energy efficiency standards. Expert input was incorporated into the chapter outline and reported to the RCP Task Force.

At the November 22, 2004, meeting, SCAG staff presented the applicable SCAG policies related to Energy and led a discussion on potential implementation actions to be included in the chapter. The Task Force contributed several potential actions, primarily related to energy efficiency measures and conservation. There was acknowledgement of the need for additional discussion on energy generation issues. Further, the Task Force requested that staff research the total need for energy through the horizon of the SCAG growth forecast and that staff determine how the suggested implementation actions might affect the total energy need.



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